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SOURCE Zeri i Popullit.MEASURES TO INCREASE, IMPROVE VEGETABLE CROPS IN ALBANIA[Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

On 8 February 1949 the Tirana government passed the following resolution: "To encourage and promote a greater production of vegetables on the part of economic institutions and various state entities and institutes with land at their disposal for this purpose, and to facilitate a better and more varied supply of vegetables by consumers' cooperatives to the urban population, the Council of Ministers, assembled on 8 February 1949, resolves: That the consumers' and procurement and sales cooperatives are forbidden to supply any sort of vegetables to any enterprise, entity, or institute which has, or can have, arable land at its disposal, but takes no interest in its proper exploitation."

In 1950, many industrial enterprises organized to support this plan. The Muhamet Gjolllesha building enterprise furnished its workers with an abundance of vegetables at a lower price than that offered by the consumers' cooperatives. The Ylli i Kuq state farms in Kamze, 8 Nenteri state farm in Sukth, and Clirimi state farm in Fier also responded to this order. At present, however, little interest is shown in furnishing workers with better food supplies.

The 1952 plan calls for a more abundant, better, and cheaper supply of vegetables from the fields or gardens of any enterprise or farmer.

The Korce and Peshkopi areas produce large potato crops amounting to 500 quintals per hectare, and abundant crops of tomatoes, spinach, cabbage, okra, onions, beans, and peas. Modern agricultural methods are used both in planting and in tending the plants. The example of a progressive farmer, Abedin Sirdani, who raised 700 quintals of spinach per hectare, shows that market gardening can be very profitable. It also shows that more vegetables could be put on the market. Many other areas in Albania, including Berat, Gjinokaster, and Fier, could be made to produce three or four crops of vegetables a year. The fertile region of Muzeqe could also produce large vegetable crops, but the farmers have made no effort to increase the yield.(1)

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The cultivation of potatoes is carried on in almost every region of Albania. It is most widespread and productive in the cooler and mountainous regions. In areas like Devoll, Peshkopi, and Permet, modern methods have given a yield of 200-500 quintals per hectare. In the central and coastal regions, because of the great heat and scarcity of rain, dry cultivation produces only 20-50 quintals of poor-quality potatoes per hectare. Consequently, potato growing has been largely abandoned in these regions.

A similar situation existed for 18 years in the warm parts of the Ukraine, where the potatoes spoiled and degenerated. Soviet scientist Lysenko showed that spoilage was due to the high temperature of the ground while the tubers were forming. He proposed planting in July so that the formation of the tubers, which begins 60-70 days after planting, would take place during the cooler months, September and October.

The necessary conditions for the growth of the potato plant -- temperature, moisture, nutriment, air, and light -- vary in different districts of Albania. Hence, the agricultural technique must vary with the region. For a potato plant to thrive, the temperature of the ground at a depth of 10 centimeters must be over 7 degrees centigrade. The best conditions occur when the temperature is 17-18 degrees. If the temperature rises to 29 degrees, formation of the tubers is interrupted. This new Soviet method of planting according to temperature has been tested in several agricultural enterprises. The Tirana Agricultural Research Station applied this method of potato planting, and obtained a crop 203 percent larger than by previous methods. In Lushnje Breth, in the 8 Nentori state farm the yield reached 123 percent and in the 29 Nentori state farm 122 percent over earlier yields.

A second Soviet method of planting potatoes is the checkrow method. Checkrow planting (in groups) saves man-hours by eliminating hoeing. Two sets of furrows, 70 x 70 centimeters, 6-8 centimeters deep, are made, perpendicular to each other, and are covered, after the planting by a cultivator drawn by tractor or draft animals. Two buds are planted in holes at each intersection. Consequently, one hectare will contain 20,500 holes and 41,000 plants. Each plant will have equal conditions for growth. Before planting, it is advisable to use 0.5-1 kilogram of organic fertilizer per group, or 100-200 quintals per hectare.

The time has now arrived to begin potato planting in the warm regions of Albania. The state farms, agricultural cooperatives, and peasantry will be given every opportunity to adopt these two advanced Soviet methods, including the concrete aid of political organizations and agricultural experts. (2)

Party organizations, people's councils, directors of enterprises and of unions must concentrate on the vital problem of providing a more varied diet for the worker. Women should be urged to take part in the planting of vegetables in villages, enterprises, and farms. The proper authorities should see that the planting is done by modern methods and in good time to supply workers in cities and industrial centers with these essential foods. (1)

SOURCES

1. Tirana, Zeri i Popullit, 28 Feb 52
2. Ibid., 22 Feb 52

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